

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (original) A tendon and ligament support (1, 10, 20, 30, 40, 50, 60, 70, 90, 100, 111) for a limb joint comprising a first limb-embracing collar (1, 112), a second limb-embracing collar (3, 113), a connection means (4) for providing articulation and separation between the two collars, and means for securing the collars so as to embrace the limb respectively above and below the joint; characterised in that the connection means is adapted to provide limited ligament and/or tendon elongation under load, and includes means arranged to the posterior side of the joint so as to exert a resistance (21, 61, 71, 114, 115) to joint movement over a predetermined range of joint rotation.

2. (original) A tendon and ligament support as claimed in claim 1, wherein the resistance-exerting means includes adjustment means (118) to vary the amount of resistance exerted to said joint movement.

3. (currently amended) A tendon and ligament support as claimed in claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~, wherein the resistance-exerting means is arranged;

- to prevent joint movement beyond said predetermined critical amount of joint rotation, or
- to exert progressively increasing resistance to joint movement joint rotates under downward pressure, or
- to exert a substantially constant resistance to joint movement as the joint rotates under downward pressure, or
- to exert no resistance to joint movement until the joint rotates beyond a predetermined critical amount of joint rotation, or
- to exert total resistance to joint movement in both flexion and extension when so required.

4. (currently amended) A tendon and ligament support as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, in which the connection means accommodate limited lateral joint movement.

5. (currently amended) A tendon and ligament support as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1, in which the connection means includes one or more hinges (11, 114).

6. (currently amended) A tendon and ligament support as claimed in ~~any of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1, in which the resistance-exerting means is provided by a brake (21), or by a stop to prevent joint movement beyond said predetermined critical amount of joint rotation.

7. (original) A tendon and ligament support as claimed in claim 1, in which the resistance-exerting means is provided by a connector of high tensile strength and limited elasticity (61,

71, 115) connected to one or more points on each of the first limb-embracing collar (2) and the second limb-embracing collar (3), preferably adapted so as to mimic an artificial tendon or ligament arrangement.

8. (original) A tendon and ligament support as claimed in claim 1, in which the resistance-exerting means comprises:

a compressible member (73) mounted against a support (74) on one collar (2);

a compressible member engaging means (75) embracing the member between itself and the support and connected to the other collar whereby pivoting movement of one collar away from the other causes the member (73) to be compressed.

9. (original) A tendon and ligament support as claimed in claim 1, in which the connection means is a connecting piece (4) formed from a non-rigid, essentially inelastic or stiff material of high tensile strength, and wherein the resistance-exerting means comprises a bendable mid portion of said connection piece.

10. (currently amended) A tendon and ligament support as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, in which either collars (2, 3) comprise air intake entrances (103) at the front face of the device, and/or comprise channels (91, 104) to allow coolant gas or liquid pass from one part of the device to another.

11. (currently amended) A tendon and ligament support as claimed in ~~any one of the preceding claims~~ claim 1, when adapted as a support for a horse's fetlock joint (5).

12. (original) A tendon and ligament support as claimed in claim 11, in which at least one of said collars further comprises a panel (123) constructed from shock-absorbent composite materials (122) adapted to provide protection to a horse's fore leg against over reach striking by the horse's hind leg.